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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
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RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0187
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NOUAKCHOTT 000598

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MR](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FORMALLY
PROPOSES EXIT STRATEGY

Classified By: CDA Dennis Hankins for Reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (SBU) Action Request: See paragraph 7.

12. (SBU) The President of the National Assembly, Messaoud Ould Boulkheir, has sent all diplomatic and international organization missions a diplomatic note outlining an exit strategy he hopes "can serve as a basis for responsible discussion acceptable to all concerned parties to develop solutions that consolidate rule of law, stability, unity and civil peace while preserving our precious democratic accomplishments and hopes for greater prosperity." Ould Boulkheir makes clear, "It goes without saying that the utility of this proposal is subject to its acceptance by the President of the Republic Sidi Mohamed Ould Cheikh Abdallahi to whom I was unable to submit this plan due to the conditions of his current detention." The proposal comes on the eve of ACP Article 96 negotiations between the junta and the European Commission scheduled to start October 20 in Paris and is clearly timed to influence those talks.

13. (SBU) The elements of Ould Boulkheir's plan (full Dip Note in French sent to AF/W) seeks to create a negotiated process acceptable to the different parties and, in particular, acceptable to, "(a) the party that benefits from the force of legitimacy that is represented by President Abdallahi, (b) the party that imposes itself as a fact that is represented by General Aziz." The plan, which differs from that earlier proposal calling for the resignation of President Abdallahi in favor of the President of the Senate, calls for two phases:

(a) Initial meetings between President Abdallahi and General Aziz,

(b) Creation of a negotiating committee in the form of Council for an Exit to the Crisis (Conseil de Sortie de Crise (CSC)) composed of:

- President Abdallahi
- The President of the Senate
- The President of the National Assembly
- The Leader of the Opposition
- The President of the Economic and Social Council
- The President of the Constitutional Council
- The President of the High Islamic Council
- General Aziz
- The President of the Human Rights Commission
- The President of the Bar Association
- A representative of the FNDD

-- A representative of parliamentarians in favor of the coup
-- A representative of the UN
-- A representative of the AU
-- A representative of the Arab League
-- A representative of the European Union
-- A representative of the United States

¶4. (SBU) Ould Boulkheir defines the role of the CSC as finding a solution to the crisis built around six points:

(a) The return to legality and the restoration of President Abdallahi to his legitimate functions.

(b) The creation of an impartial consensus government with significant autonomy to organize residential elections with neutrality and transparency with the "assistance and supervision" of the international community. This government would also re-engage state activities and restart economic and diplomatic activities.

(c) Determination of the time needed to organize elections.

(d) Organization of presidential elections open to all who are authorized by the constitution.

(e) Upon the completion of new elections, the new president will dissolve the National Assembly and organize new parliamentary elections.

(f) Military officers involved in the coup will have guarantees protecting them from reprisal or settling of

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accounts. They will be isolated from all sensitive positions in the army. Those who wish to play a political role must resign from the military.

The CSC will automatically dissolve as soon as this plan is adopted and formalized. The President will reassume his functions with an engagement to respect and implement this plan.

¶5. (SBU) Ould Boulkheir closes his plan noting that its application will depend on continued pressure to convince "all of the parties" that there is no other viable solution.

¶6. (C) Comment: Ould Boulkheir has played perhaps the most constructive role since the crisis. Highly aware of his constitutional role as President of the National Assembly, he has consistently opposed the coup while remaining open to dialogue. He is allied with the FNDD but maintains some policy distance. His plan comes from the perspective of one firmly opposed to the coup with just enough concessions to make it theoretically doable. This plan would be a retreat for the military but does allow for Aziz to be involved in the political discussions about transition mechanisms and leaves the door open for Aziz to run for president himself if he resigns. By making no mention of the High State Council or the Laghdaf Government (both of which he would see as having no legal basis), by referring to Aziz only as "General," and by inserting the idea that all military coup leaders would be removed from sensitive positions even if they stay in the military makes this a strongly anti-coup proposal. We have not yet had the chance to discuss the proposal with FNDD leaders, but expect they would see this calling for concessions on their part -- notably the acceptance of only a temporary return of President Abdallahi and the lack of restriction on future candidates. The FNDD has previously been strong in its view that the military should play no role whatsoever in discussions of transition arrangements. If adopted, European partners are likely to resent seeing the U.S. as the only bilateral member of the CSC. End Comment

¶7. (SBU) Action Request: Please advise if and how Mission should respond to the President of the National Assembly's

diplomatic note.
HANKINS